

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9756

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL MONTDXAL

AMCONSUL QUEBEC

EECONSUL TORONTO 21

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 1073

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, CA, FR, HA

SUBJECT: HAITIAN-CANADIAN RELATIONS IMPROVE

REF: (A) BURKE/ISHAM LTR. OF 4/10/75 (NOTAL)

(B) VINCENT MEMO OF 4/14/75 (NOTAL);

(C) PAUP A-49 OF 4/5/75 (NOTAL);

(D) VINCENT MEMO OF 4/1/75 (NOTAL);

(E) PAUP 620 (NOTAL)

1. CANADIAN CHARGE AGNES IS CAUTIOUSLY HOPEFUL THAT THE WORSENING OF HAITIAN-CANADIAN RELATIONS THAT OCCURRED OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS HAS BEEN STOPPED, AND THAT GRADUALLY RELATIONS WILL IMPROVE. THE BASIS FOR THIS HOPE IS THE SEEMINGLY FAVORABLE UTITUTDE OF PRESIDENT DUVALIER, WITH WHOM AGNES SAID HE HAD A CANDID BUT RELAXED AND FRIENDLY HOUR AND ONE-HALF PRIVATE DISCUSSION ON APRIL 18 CONCERNING BILATERAL PROBLEMS.

2. PETER HALL INVITED TO RETURN - AGNES SAID HE TOLD DUVALIER THE FACTS ABOUT THE REASONS FOR NEWSMAN PETER HALL'S DEPARTURE FROM HAITI AS BEST HE KNEW THEM (PAUP 814), ADDING THAT HE FEARED
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THAT HALL FELT SO UNJUSTLY TREATED THAT HE MIGHT PROVIDE MATERIAL

TO THE CANADIAN PRESS THAT COULD HARM BILATERAL RELATIONS. HE SAID DUVALIER APPEARED MOST UNDERSTANDING, AND ASKED HIM TO RELAY A MESSAGE TO HALL ADVISING THAT DUVALIER PERSONALLY GUARANTEED HALL'S SAFETY AND WELL-BEING SHOULD HE WISH TO RETURN TO HAITI, WHICH DUVALIER SAID HALL COULD DO AT ANY TIME. AGNES THANKED DUVALIER

, BUT ALSO CAUTIONED THAT HALL MAY HAVE BECOME SO EMBITTERED THAT HE MIGHT NOT ACCEPT DUVALIER'S COMMENDABLE OFFER. (AGNES STILL HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT HALL, WHO HE SUSPECTS MAY BE IN LONDON TEMPORARILY, TO CONVEY DUVALIER'S OFFER.)

3. RESIDENCE PERMITS/INVESTMENT GOC AID - WITHOUT ONCE MENTIONING INTERIOR SECRETARY BLANCHET BY NAME, AGNES SAID HE BRIEFED DUVALIER ON THE INABILITY OF ANY CANADAIN TO OBTAIN RESIDENCE PERMITS, INCLUDING WOULD-BE INVESTORS AND LONG ESTABLISHED CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES. AGNES SAID HE ALSO TOLD DUVALIER THAT IN HIS OPINION A POINT HAD BEEN REACHED WHERE EITHER BILATERAL RELATIONS COULD EXPAND IN TERMS OF NEW CANADIAN PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND GOC ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, OR THEY COULD BEGIN TO ATROPHY AS CANADIANS FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO FUNCTION IN HAITI. HE ADDED THAT IF THE GOH NO LONGER WISHED TO ENCOURAGE CANADIAN ASSISTANCE AND INVESTMENT, IT WAS PERHPAS BEST THAT HE BE SO ADVISED SO THAT HE COULD ARRANGE FOR THE CANADIAN PRESENCE TO FADE DISCREETLY FROM HAITI WITHOUT RECRIMINATIONS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS. DUVALIER REPLIED EMPHATICALLY THAT THIS WAS NOT THE CASE, AND THAT ON THE CONTRARY HE SOUGHT AN EXPANSION OF RELATIONS. DUVALIER SAID THAT WITHOUT FOREIGN INVESTMENT HAITI MIGHT HAVE TO WORK FOR "A THOUSAND YEARS" TO ACHIEVE AN ECONOMIC BREAKTHROUGH. DUVALIER THEN TOLD AGNES THAT HE WOULD LOOK INTO THE MATTER, AND ASSURED HIM THAT CANADIANS WERE WELCOME IN HAITI.

4. MIXED RESLUTS SO FAR - AGNES REPORTS THAT HIS FRANK APPROACH WITH DUVALIER HAS PRODUCED FAVORABLE RESULTS IN A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC CASES HE MENTIONED TO DUVALIER INVOLVING CANADIANS SUFFERING RED TAPE PROBLEMS WITH VARIOUS GOH AGENCIES. ALSO HE FELT THAT DUVALIER'S SUDDEN DICISION TO GIVE PRESIDENTIAL PATRONAGE TO CIDA'S REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN PETIT GOAVE (PAUP 1046) WAS A GESTURE TO SMOOTH RUFFLED CANADIAN FEATHERS. ON THE OTHER HAND INTERIOR SECRETARY BLANCHET HAS YET TO BUDGE IN HIS ADAMENT CONFIDENTIAL

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REFUSAL TO TRANT NEW RESIDENCE PERMITS TO CANADIANS.

5. BLANCHET/FRENCH ATTITUDE - AGNES CLAIMED THAT BLANCHET'S RIGID ATTITUDE TOWARD FOREIGNERS SEEKING RESIDENCE PERMITS IS NOW BADLY AFFECTING FRENCH MISSIONARIES AND PRIVATE CITIZENS AS WELL. CONSEQUENTLY FRENCH AMBASSADOR DEBLE RECENTLY TOLD AGNES THAT HE, TOO, WILL SEEK AN AUDIENCE WITH DUVALIER TO REQUEST

PRESIDENTIAL INTERVENTION BEFORE THE SITUATION HARMS FRANCO-HAITIAN RELATIONS. AGNES ADDED WRYLY THAT IF THE U.S. WERE TO BACK UP THE CANADIAN AND FRENCH DEMARCHES, MAYBE BLANCHET WOULD FINALLY HAVE TO CHANGE HIS WAYS. MEANWHILE AGNES INTENDS TO PRESS RESIDENCE PERMIT REQUESTS MADE BY RESPONSIBLE CANADIANS, AND IS ARRANGING A FOLLOW-UP VISIT WITH DUVALIER TO BRIEF HIM ON HIS RESULTS.

6. COMMENT - WE GATHER THAT AGNES WENT WELL BEYOND THE CAUTIONS INSTRUCTIONS HE RECEIVED FROM OTTAWA TO LIMIT HIS DEMARCHES TO THE GOH OVER HIS PROBLEMS WITH THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT. SO FAR HIS BOLDNESS HAS NOT BACKFIRED, AND MAY PAY DIVIDENDS AT LEAST IN THE SHORT RUN. AGNES, UNUSED TO THE WAYS OF THE UNDERDEVELOPED WORLD, IS BEGINNING TO ADJUST TO HAITIAN POLITICAL PECULIARITIES WITH BETTER HUMOR, ESPECIALLY SINCE GOH GUARDS NO LONGER HARASS VISITORS TO HIS CHANCERY AND RESIDENCE. NEVERTHELESS, HE IS COMBATIVE IN THE FACE OF WHAT HE PERCEIVES AS IMPROPER CONDUCT AFFECTING CANADIAN INTERESTS, AND COULD OVERREACT IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT TO ONE OF BLANCHET'S ANTI-CANADIAN STATEMENTS OR VERBAL ABUSE OF A CANADIAN CITIZEN.
THOMSON

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